

National Marine Charter Association (NMCA) Director of Government Affairs Melissa Moskal met with representatives of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on April 20, 2004, to discuss NMCA's opposition to part of the FCC's proposed rule on maritime communications (WT Docket No. 00-48; RM-9499; FCC 04-3).

NMCA is the trade association for the 40,000+ vessels in the marine charter industry. The vast majority of marine charter operators are small businesses that operate near the margin of profitability and need to comply with complex, burdensome, and expensive federal regulations.

Specifically discussed was NMCA's opposition to the FCC proposal for all small passenger vessels to have a reserve power source for their communications equipment. NMCA argued that the cost per operator would be between \$80 and \$400, depending on the type of equipment already installed on their vessel. With an estimated 40,000 vessels in the marine charter industry, that would be a small business cost between \$3.2 million and \$16 million.

NMCA also stated that the industry is working to self-regulate many safety procedures, and that a reserve power source for communications devices is part of their independent accreditation program, the Accredited Vessel Inspection Program (A-VIP).

NMCA believes that small businesses in the marine charter industry are already saddled with excessive government regulation from several agencies, and that also allowing the reserve power source requirement to be addressed through industry self-regulation will save small businesses money and the burden of further government regulation.

Submitted on June 4, 2004.

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